

S. P. I. No. 44994. *Chamaedorea* sp. A dwarf palm collected in dense forests near Purula, department of Baja Verapaz, at an elevation of approximately 5,500 feet.

This species is usually called by Spanish-speaking Guatemalans *pacayito*, which means 'small pacaya.' By the Indians of the Alta Verapaz, who speak the Kekchi language, it is called *ko-kiip*.

Judging from accounts given me by various residents of the Verapaz, this palm commonly occurs in the mountains of that region at elevations of about 4,000 to 6,000 feet. It always grows in dense forests, and must be considered a shade- and moisture-loving species. The soil in which it grows is nothing but decayed leaves for the first several inches, and is kept continually moist by the abundant rains of this region. In Coban the *pacayito* is a favorite house plant, being grown in pots and tubs and used to decorate living rooms and patios. In the city of Guatemala it is occasionally used for the same purpose, the plants being brought down from Coban.

In the forest, the *pacayito* seems never to reach a greater height than three feet. It is a true dwarf (one might also call it a miniature palm), for it reaches maturity and comes into flower when not over a foot high. This dwarf habit makes it of unusual interest as a pot plant for the north, as it can be fruited in an ordinary living room when growing in a four-inch pot.

It makes its character leaves almost as soon as the young plant is out of the seed. I have seen many plants in the forest which were not over 4 inches high, and already had two to four fully characterized leaves. When quite small it strongly resembles *Cocos weddelliana*, but the pinnae are somewhat broader and not so numerous.

When mature, the plant has a slender trunk, perhaps half an inch thick and two feet high. The leaves are a foot to eighteen inches in length, rather finely pinnate, deep green, graceful, with the rachis stiff but arching slightly. In the Verapaz the flowers are produced in June and July, and the small, round, black fruits about as large as small peas, ripen in December.

Since it is found at considerable elevations in the Verapaz, it seems likely that this palm will be sufficiently hardy for cultivation in the open in California and Florida. It should be provided with ample